

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----043352 030624Z /11

R 021939Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0937
INFO AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 19752

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: SO UK PBOR XA
SUBJECT: SOMALI DELEGATION VISITS LONDON

REF: (A) MOGADISCIO 2024, (B) STATE 280384

SUMMARY: A HIGH-LEVEL SOMALI DELEGATION VISITED LONDON ON NOV 28 AND 29, AS THE FIRST STOP IN A FOUR-COUNTRY WESTERN EUROPEAN TRIP TO SOLICIT POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND MILITARY SUPPORT. WHILE THE BRITISH MAINTAINED A FIRM LINE REGARDING MILITARY ASSISTANCE, THEY WERE ENCOURAGING ABOUT THE POSSIBILITIES OF ECONOMIC AID. THE BRITISH STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SOMALIS MAKING PEACE IN BOTH THE OGADEN AND ON THE KENYAN FRONTIER.

1. EAST AFRICA HEAD ALAN MUNRO GAVE EMBASSY OFFICER ACCOUNT VISIT BY SOMALI DELEGATION ON NOV 28-29.

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HIGH-POWERED DELEGATION WAS HEADED BY VICE PRESIDENT HUSSEIN KULMIE AFRAH AND INCLUDED FOREIGN MINISTER ABDUL RAHMAN JAMA BARRE, AND CHAIRMAN OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS AHMED HABIB AHMED. THE DELEGATION ALSO INCLUDED THE SOMALI CHIEF OF PROTOCOL, THE HEAD OF THE ECONOMIC AFFAIRS BUREAU OF FOREIGN MINISTRY, REPRESENTATIVES OF THE DEFENSE AND

AGRICULTURE MINISTRIES, AS WELL AS A HALF DOZEN SOMALI JOURNALISTS. LONDON WAS THE FIRST STOP IN THEIR WEEK-LONG TRIP TO FOUR WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES. THE DELEGATION WAS TO PROCEED TO BONN, PARIS AND ROME BEFORE RETURNING HOME.

2. DURING THEIR VISIT, THE VICE PRESIDENT, THE FOREIGN MINISTER AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS CHAIRMAN MET WITH FOREIGN SECRETARY OWEN AND PRIME MINISTER CALLAGHAN. OWEN HOSTED DINNER FOR THE DELEGATION ON NOV 28. THE ECONOMIC SPECIALISTS MET CONCURRENTLY WITH A MINISTER IN H.M. OVERSEAS DEVELOPMENT MINISTRY.

3. THE VICE PRESIDENT CARRIED WITH HIM A LETTER FROM PRESIDENT SIAD WHICH CONTAINED THE SUBSTANCE OF THE ORAL MESSAGE.

4. THE GIST OF THE MESSAGE WHICH THE SOMALIS BROUGHT TO LONDON WAS:

A) THAT SOMALIA DESIRED TO RENEW TIES WITH THE UK AND WISHED TO MAINTAIN GOOD RELATIONS;

B) THAT THERE EXISTS A SOVIET MASTER PLAN FOR THE ENTIRE REGION, INVOLVING A SOVIET STRATEGIC BELT WHICH WOULD EXTEND FROM CENTRAL AFRICA UP THROUGH ARABIA. THE SOVIETS ORIGINALLY PLANNED TO USE SOMALIA AS THE FULCRUM, BUT IT IS NOW ETHIOPIA. THE SOMALIS CLAIMED THAT THEY KNEW OF THIS PLAN BECAUSE OF THEIR CLOSE CONFIDENTIAL

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INVOLVEMENT WITH THE SOVIETS. SEEING WHAT THE SOVIETS WERE UP TO, HOWEVER, CAUSED THEM TO BREAK WITH THEM.

C) NOW THAT SOMALIA HAS THROWN OUT THE RUSSIANS AND THAT ETHIOPIA IS SUPPORTED BY THEM, THE SOMALIS FIND THEMSELVES IN BREECH WITH THE SOVIETS, AND IN ORDER TO RESIST THEM, NEED POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND MILITARY AID.

5. THE SOMALIS TOOK AN INTRANSIGENT LINE ON THE SUBJECT OF THE OGADEN CONFLICT. THEY CONTENDED THAT THE OAU NO LONGER HELD TO A PRINCIPAL TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY BUT NOW ESPOUSED SELF-DETERMINATION AND CLAIMED THAT THOSE SOMALIS IN ETHIOPIA WOULD "RATHER DIE THAN REMAIN UNDER ETHIOPIA RULE." AFTER A SHORT TIME THEY DROPPED THE FICTION THAT THE FIGHTING IS BEING DONE ONLY BY THE WSLF.

6. THE SOMALIS SAID THAT THEY WERE WORRIED ABOUT THEIR RELATIONS WITH KENYA BUT CONCERNED ALSO ABOUT THE USE OF MOMBASA AS A SUPPLY ROUTE FOR ETHIOPIA. WHILE THEY DID NOT TAKE THIS TOO MUCH FARTHER, THEY MENTIONED THAT THE

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AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 LONDON 19752

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KENYANS WERE NOT MAKING IT EASY FOR THE SOMALIS IN THE
NORTHERN FRONTIER DISTRICTS. NONETHELESS, THEY WANTED TO
MEND THE FENCES WITH THE KENYANS, BUT THE KENYANS HAD
NOT BEEN RESPONSIVE.

7. THEY MENTIONED PRESIDENT SIAD'S SHORT VISIT TO ADEN
ENROUTE TO CAIRO AND THAT HE HAD SPOKEN TO THE YEMENIS
ABOUT THEIR CONCERN OVER SOVIET NAVAL USE OF ADEN AND
THEIR DEPLOYMENT OF SHIPS IN THE AREA. ON THAT SUBJECT
THEY ADDED THAT THE SOVIETS HAD JUST A SHORT TIME
EARLIER STOPPED A SOMALI FREIGHTER IN THE STRAITS OF
BAB AL MANDAB.

8. A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF ATTENTION OF THE DELEGATION
WAS DEVOTED TO ECONOMIC MATTERS. THE SOMALIS SAID THAT
THEY WERE IN GREAT NEED OF ASSISTANCE, AND THAT SINCE THE
DEPARTURE OF THE RUSSIANS THERE WERE A NUMBER OF
UNFINISHED PROJECTS FOR WHICH THEY NEEDED AID, AND HOPED
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THAT THE UK AND OTHER WESTERN COUNTRIES WOULD BE WILLING TO HELP.

9. WE WERE TOLD THAT THE BRITISH TOOK A GENERALLY "ROBUST" APPROACH WHICH WAS TAKEN VERY QUIETLY BY THE SOMALIS. THE BRITISH STATED UNEQUIVOCALLY THAT THE UK WAS NOT PREPARED TO GIVE MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO SOMALIA WHILE THERE WAS FIGHTING IN THE OGADEN. THEY FURTHER MADE A STRONG POINT THAT THEY THOUGHT THE SOMALIS SHOULD MEND FENCES WITH THE KENYANS. (THEY ALSO NOTED THAT SIAD'S STATEMENTS ON THE SUBJECT HAD BEEN, TO A DEGREE, CONFLICTING.) THE BRITISH RECOMMENDED THAT SOMALIA SHOULD NOW RETREAT FROM ITS POSITION OF RELATIVE STRENGTH AND NOTED THAT ETHIOPIA MIGHT BE WILLING TO NEGOTIATE. THEY SAID THAT THEY DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THE SOVIETS WOULD LET THE SOMALIS WIN AND THAT THEY SHOULD BE REALISTIC AND THEREFORE THEY SHOULD NOW SEEK A SETTLEMENT, AS THIS IS PROBABLY AS GOOD A MOMENT AS THEY WOULD GET. THE BRITISH NOTED THAT AS FAR AS THEY KNEW, THE CONSENSUS IN THE OAU IS STILL THAT THE PRINCIPLE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY IS OF PRIME IMPORTANCE.

10. THE BRITISH ALSO INDICATED THAT AS FAR AS ECONOMIC AID WAS CONCERNED, THEY WANTED TO HELP. THEY WELCOMED THE BREAK WITH THE SOVIETS AND WANTED TO GIVE THEM WHATEVER HELP IS POSSIBLE. THEY ADDED THAT THEY WERE GLAD THAT THEIR RELATIONS WITH SOMALIA WERE BACK ON A FRIENDLY FOOTING. THE BRITISH SAID THAT THEY, TOO, WERE CONCERNED WITH THE STRATEGIC SITUATION IN THE AREA BUT THAT WHAT THE SOMALIS ARE DOING IN THE OGADEN MAKES FOR DIFFICULTIES. WHILE WISHING THEM WELL, THEY RECOMMENDED THAT THE SOMALIS SETTLE ON BOTH FRONTS. MUNRO THOUGHT THAT THEY HAD MADE SOME IMPACT BUT ON THE

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QUESTION OF SOMALIA IN THE OGADEN, THEY REMAINED OBDURATE.

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